Position Description

**Position Title**
Principal Adviser Employment Relations

**Reports To**
Divisional Manager Organisational Capabilities

**Group**
Human Resources Group

**Date Created/Updated**
September 2018

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**About the Ministry**
The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (the Ministry) acts in the world to make New Zealand safer and more prosperous. It does this by working to understand geopolitical changes across the world, advancing the Government’s international priorities, and providing advice to the Government on its implications. By building connections and influence in other countries we act to promote and protect New Zealand’s interests.

We seek to deliver value to New Zealand and New Zealanders, through:

- improved prosperity for New Zealand and our region
- the stability, security and resilience of our country, our people and our region
- leadership by amplifying New Zealand’s influence and standing in the world
- kaitiakitanga or stewardship, by delivering solutions to global challenges for the benefit of present and future generations.

Our values are:

**Impact**
- We achieve for New Zealand, everyday, everywhere

**Kotahitanga**
- We draw strength from our diversity

**Courage**
- We do the right thing

**Manaakitanga**
- We honour and respect others

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**Diversity and Inclusion**

We aspire to be a workplace that values and utilises diverse and inclusive thinking, people and behaviours. This means that our staff reflect the diversity of New Zealand and the countries we work in, and that the contributions of staff with diverse backgrounds, experiences, skills and perspectives are valued and respected.
**About the Group**
The role of Human Resources (HR) is to ensure that the Ministry has the people and culture to deliver on the Government’s priorities. HR provides high-level strategic and operational advice and support to the Chief Executive Officer (CE), the Senior Leadership Team (SLT), and Level 3 and 4 managers to ensure that effective HR strategies are developed and integrated into all business strategies and plans. This will help to build a high performing Ministry.

HR is also responsible for the design and delivery of a range of Ministry-wide HR policies, operational HR processes, and systems aimed at ensuring that managers have access to the best possible advice, support, and systems to motivate, develop and manage their people.

**About the Position**
The Ministry supports a range of flexible work options as the default setting for all positions.

This position is in the Organisational Capabilities team of the HR Group and is responsible for providing advice and guidance on Employment Relations matters.

The Principal Adviser Employment Relations (Principal Adviser) provides expert advice and guidance to the Deputy Secretary, Human Resources Group, CE, SLT and to HR Business Partners (BP) to support managers to manage their employment relations issues. The Principal Adviser’s role is to operate at a strategic level and to assist in operationalising the strategy into guidance for managers. The Principal Adviser will work with the Ministry’s leadership team to develop employment relations strategy, the bargaining strategy and approaches to employment relations matters.

The Principal Adviser is also responsible for managing the Ministry’s approach to contract management, ensuring that our Collective Employment Agreement (CEA) and Individual Employment Agreement (IEA) renewal process is managed effectively.

**Key Accountabilities**
The following key accountabilities of this role assist in delivering the Ministry’s purpose.

- **ER Strategy Development**
  - Develop the Ministry’s employment relations strategy to align with the strategic direction of the Ministry, our people strategy, our culture and values, and the Ministry’s employee value proposition.
  - Advise senior leadership on the ER strategy and how to operationalise this.
  - Give effect to the strategy through our engagement with unions and staff.
  - Work with and provide support to the Principal Adviser Organisational Capabilities in the development of our overarching strategies and ensure this is reflected in our ER and bargaining strategies.

- **In-house ER expert**
  - Provide technical advice, support and coaching to BP’s on managing ER matters especially those that are more complex.
  - Provide a quality assurance role to BP’s in respect of investigations, disciplinary processes, restructuring proposals etc.
  - Review all settlement proposals and comment/advise on parameters for settlement.
  - Assist BP’s and Payroll to resolve complex contractual or dispute matters.
  - Keep current with employment legislation and provide regular briefings to BP’s and HRG on changes and the interpretation of this through the courts.
• Unions and Bargaining
  o Manage union relationships; respond to their concerns and share information of interest with them.
  o Develop the Ministry’s bargaining strategy leading into each bargaining round and align with our organisational strategy and goals.
  o Develop innovative approaches to the things we want to achieve through bargaining and in response to union claims.
  o Facilitate responses to union issues, connecting them with the right people in the wider HR Group on issues of relevance.
  o Guide consultation with unions, particularly on major initiatives.
  o Maintain information on union entitlements e.g. education leave.
  o Represent the Ministry on its bargaining team and provide advice, support and direction to the bargaining team while operating within the parameters set by the Ministry’s bargaining goals.
  o Manage the process of obtaining SLT and SSC approval on the bargaining strategy and any modification required to these during bargaining.
  o Coordinate all the research, information and modelling needs of the Ministry’s bargaining team.

• Contract Management
  o Manage the Ministry’s approach to IEAs ensuring that there is a suitable framework and that these are regularly reviewed and aligned, where appropriate, to the CEA outcomes.
  o Maintain all templates that form part of the Ministry’s contractual arrangements with employees and variations from the collective are captured.
  o Maintain an overview of Staff Employed at Post contract templates.
  o Assist the audit process by reviewing these to ensure Ministry minimum requirements are covered and they do not contain unenforceable references to NZ law or provisions we would be of concern.
  o Review local legal advice sourced by Posts to ensure template contracts are appropriate and compliant with local law as required.
  o Support the Business to work with Posts on the standard of our contractual arrangements.

• Maintain a central record of all disciplinary action, investigations, disputes and grievance.
  o Liaise with BP’s to maintain an accurate overview of where these matters are at.
  o Maintain a central record of the outcome of all of these matters.
  o Provide a brief summary of the situation quarterly.

• Code of Conduct
  o Assess and recommend improvements to the Code of Conduct as identified through our support for disciplinary and performance management activities.
  o Liaise with BP’s to collect their view on gaps in the Code of Conduct or other related policies that require change.

• Continuous improvement
  o Assess opportunities to introduce greater simplification into our policies and procedures and to eliminate unnecessary complexity.

• Leadership
  o Contribute to the division’s delivery of its planned and agreed activity stream to realise its strategic priorities and high level outcomes
o Demonstrate the organisation’s values, goals, policies and procedures in all aspects of work
o Buddy new members of the team supporting a culture of learning and sharing of experiences

• Relationship Management
  o Develop and maintain key relationships both internally and externally in order to advance the division’s objectives

• Organisational Responsibilities
  o Understand the Ministry’s strategic priorities and high-level outcomes framework and how this role contributes to the framework
  o Understand and apply the strategic context in which the Ministry operates, including priorities and perspectives of the Ministers, partner agencies and external stakeholders
  o Contribute to the preparation and reporting requirements of the Ministry’s accountability documents
  o Understand tikanga and Treaty of Waitangi principles and have sufficient appreciation of Te Reo Māori to be able to apply the Ministry Māori dimension, underpinned by Ministry values, in a way that is relevant to the context of our business
  o Using the Ministry’s Capability and Leadership Frameworks, identify and participate in opportunities for learning and development, including through regular coaching and mentoring
  o Identify and pursue opportunities to build specialised skills, knowledge and experience aligned with the Ministry’s Strategic Framework
  o Contribute to Ministry-wide projects and emergency response situations
  o Be aware of and adhere to the Ministry’s Health and Safety policies and procedures
  o All other duties as requested by the employer

• Knowledge Management
  o Contribute to the continuous development of the Ministry’s knowledge base by using the Ministry’s internal systems, sharing information and data with relevant internal stakeholders

• Health and Safety
  The Ministry is committed to providing a safe and healthy working environment for all staff, including contractors and other workers, both on and offshore.
  You are responsible for:
  o taking reasonable care of your own and other’s health and safety and being mindful of the effect of your actions (or lack of action) on the health and safety of others
  o complying with reasonable Ministry instructions to ensure the Ministry is able to comply with the Health and Safety at Work Act 2015
  o cooperating with health and safety policies and procedures
  o identifying and reporting hazards, injuries, illness and incidents (including near misses) that arise from your work or in the workplace
  o identifying and eliminating or mitigating health and safety risks so far as reasonably practicable and consulting with others in doing so
  o raising health and safety matters with your manager or health and safety representative (or contact as appropriate)
  o ensuring that all health and safety incidents, injuries, near misses are immediately reported through the HR Kiosk
  o ensuring that significant hazards and risks or critical incidents are drawn to the immediate attention of your Manager.
Qualifications, Skills, knowledge & experience
The following are required:

Qualifications
- Post-graduate degree in Human Resources, international relations, political science or an equivalent qualification from a related field; or equivalent level of experience working in a ER/HR role.

Experience
- Extensive and relevant experience dealing with complex ER issues.
- Ability to operate strategically and develop trust and credibility with the SLT.
- A proven track record in conflict resolution and the ability to negotiate complex issues.
- Extensive knowledge of employment agreement procedures and legislation.
- Good knowledge of remuneration management practices and performance appraisal systems.

Skills
- Ability to convey complex information logically and concisely in both written and oral forms.
- Ability to research and analyse issues and develop appropriate recommendations.
- Strong oral and written communication skills.
- Strong interpersonal skills.
- Ability to work under pressure.
- Ability to work as part of a team.
- Ability to work with staff from all levels of the organisation.
- Ability to facilitate and coordinate tasks.
- Good policy formulation skills and sound judgement.
- Sensitive to and appreciative of EEO issues.
- Ability to work with people from other cultures.
- The ability to facilitate complex tasks in a multi-disciplinary environment.

Relationships
The position is required to build and maintain the following relationships:

Internal
- Deputy Secretary, Human Resources Group
- Human Resources leadership team
- HR Business Partners
- CEO and SLT (Level 2 Ministry Managers)
- Level 3 and Level 4 Ministry Managers
- Organisational Capabilities Team and wider HR Group.

External
- State Services Commission
- Other government departments and agencies
- Unions (FSA and PSA)
- ER practitioners in both the Public and the Private Sector
- Consulting companies as appropriate (including employment advice)

Delegations
As set out in the Ministry’s Instrument of Delegation

Mandatory Role Requirements
- You must be able to obtain and maintain an appropriate New Zealand Government Security clearance.
- You must hold New Zealand citizenship or be a permanent resident.